THE UNION.

SPEECH

OF

WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

ON PRESENTING THE NEW YORK UNION PETITION,

JANUARY 30, 1861.

Mr. SEWARD said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I have received a communication from Mr. A. A. Low, James A. Gallatin, Peter Cooper, and others, who are a committee of twenty-five citizens of New York, who are charged with the duty of presenting to the Senate of the United States the petition of the inhabitants of that city, praying for the exercise of the best wisdom of Congress in finding some plan for the adjustment of the troubles which disturb the peace and happiness and endanger the safety of the nation. In compliance with their request, I waive the reading of the memorial, and ask that the Senate will indulge me with allowing to be read at the Secretary's desk, the resolutions the committee have adopted in regard to the views they desire to present.

The Secretary read, as follows:

Report of the special committee to a meeting at the rooms of the Chamber of Commerce, Saturday, January 26, 1861.

The special committee to whom was assigned the duty of digesting and presenting a proper basis of action for the committee charged with the presentation to Congress of the memorial of citizens of New York, praying that such measures may be adopted by Congress as will restore tranquillity and peace to our now distracted country, beg leave respectfully to report:

That, since the last meeting of the memorial committee, a legislative printed document has been received, stated to embrace propositions for an adjustment of pending difficulties between the northern and southern States, agreed upon by a committee of the border States, including Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, and North Carolina, from the South; and New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, from the North. These propositions contemplate both acts of legislation and amendments of the Constitution, and which, with some modifications and additions, are as follows, and which the special committee adopt as part of this their report, which they submit for the consideration of the memorial committee, and respectfully recommend for their adoption as the basis of their action under the memorial, and in furtherance of its objects.

Mr. SEWARD. Mr. President, excepting the House of Representatives, this Senate Chamber is the largest hall that is, or ever has been, occupied by a legislative assembly since the world began. The memorial which I am charged to present is of such a length that, if extended, it would cross the Senate Chamber, in its extremest length, eighteen times. I have already presented memorials from the city of New York signed by citizens of that place to the number of twenty-five thousand This memorial bears the signatures of thirty-eight thousand more, making, in the whole, sixty-three thousand of the inhabitants of that city who have signed this appeal to the Senate. The committee who have charge of this memorial are a fair representation—I might almost say an embodiment—of the citizens who direct and wield the commerce of the great emporium of our country, the commerce of a continent, and a commerce which this present year, owing to the distractions of the times, is put, for the first time, in the condition of proving itself to be the controlling commerce of the world. The memorial which they present may be regarded as a fair expression of the interest which is felt by that great commercial community, and probably a fair exponent of the interest in the same great subject which is felt by the whole commercial interest of the United States. In any other part of the world, such a communication would command obedience. In England, France, Russia, Prussia, or Germany, a demonstration of the will of the commerce of the country decides the questions of war or of peace. Happily, sir, that is not the case in this great Republic. The interest of commerce is but one. The interest of agriculture, manufactures, and mining, each of them, is another. Each is entitled to, and each secures, equal respect; and the consideration which they obtain is due, not to their number, not to their wealth, but is due to the circumstances under which they lend their advice to the Government. But I do not hesitate to say that the character of these petitioners entitle them to the respectful attention and consideration of Congress.

They have asked me to support this petition. I have not yet found, though I have anxiously

waited and hoped for, that manifestation of temper on the part of the people of the country and their representatives which would justify me in saying that the seceding States, or those who sympathize with them, have made propositions which the citizens of the adhering States could accept; or, as I desire to speak with impartiality upon this as upon all other occasions, to put the proposition in another form, that this or any other of the various propositions which have come from citizens of the adhering States, or those who desire to adhere to the Union, would be acceptable and satisfactory to the other party. I have thought it my duty to hold myself open and ready for the best adjustment which could be practically made; and I have therefore been obliged to ask this committee to be content with the assurance that I would express to the public and to the Senate that the spirit in which they come is perfectly commendable and perfectly satisfactory. It is gratifying to me to see that the proper spirit, the spirit of fraternal kindness, of conciliation and affection, is adopted by so large a portion of my fellow-citizens of the State to which I belong.

I have asked them, also, in return for performing my duty on this occasion, that when they have arrived at home, they will act in the same spirit and manifest their devotion to the Union above all other interests and all other sentiments, by speaking for the Union, by voting for the Union, and if it should be demanded by lending and even giving their money for the Union, and fighting in the last resort for the Union, taking care always that speaking goes before voting, voting goes before giving money, and all go before a battle, which I should regard as hazardous and dangerous, and therefore the last, as it would be the most painful measure to be resorted to for the salvation of the Union.

This is the spirit in which I have determined for myself to come up to this great question, and to pass through it, as I sincerely believe we shall pass through it. For, although this great controversy has not been already settled, I do not, therefore, any the less calculate upon and hope and expect that it will be peacefully settled, and settled for the Union. I have not been so rash as to expect that in sixty days, which have been allowed to us since the meeting of Congress—and I will be frank, sir, in saying that I have not expected that in the ninety days which are the allotted term of Congress—this great controversy would certainly be adjusted, peace restored, and the Union firmly reëstablished. I knew, sir, that sixty days, or ninety days, was the term that was fixed with definite objects and purposes by that portion of my fellow-citizens who have thought that it would advance the interests of the States to which they belonged to dissever the Union. I have not expected that reason and judgment would come back to the people and become so pervading, so universal, as that they would appreciate the danger and be able to agree on the remedies. Still, I have been willing that it should be tried, though unsuccessfully; but my confidence has remained the same, for this simple reason: that as I have not believed that the passion and frenzy of the hour could overturn this great fabric of constitutional liberty and empire in ninety days, so I have felt sure that there would be time, even after the expiration of ninety days, for the restoration of all that had been lost, and for the reëstablishment of all that was in danger.

A great many and very various interests and elements are brought into conflict in this sudden crisis; a great many personal ambitions; a great many sectional interests; and it would be strange if they could all be accommodated and arranged and harmonized, so as to admit and give full effect to the one profoundest, strongest, and most enduring sentiment or passion of the United States —that of devotion to the Union. These, whether you call them secession or revolution on the one side, or coercion or defiance on the other, are all to subside and pass away before the Union is to become the grand absorbing object of interest, affection, and duty, upon the part of the citizens of the United States. A great many partisan interests are to be repressed, suppressed, and to give place—partisan interests expressed by the Charleston platform, by the Baltimore platform, by the Chicago platform, and by the popular sovereignty platform—if indeed the Union is in danger and is to be saved; and with these interests, and with these platforms, everybody standing upon them or connected with them, is to pass away, if the Union is in danger and is to be saved, before the Union can be saved. But it will require a very short time, if this Union is in danger and does require to be saved, for all these interests and all these platforms and all these men to disappear. You and I, and every one who shall oppose, resist, stand in the way of the preservation of this Union, will appear but as moths on a summer evening, when the whirlwind of popular indignation arises that shall be excited at the full discovery that this Union is endangered through faction, or even impracticability on our part.

I have hope, confidence, that all this is to come around just as I have said, and quite soon enough; because I perceive, although we may shut our eyes to it, that the country and mankind cannot shut their eyes to the true nature of this crisis. There has been a real, a vital question in this country for twelve years at least—a question of slavery in the Territories of the United States. It was strongest in its development in 1850, when all the Pacific coast, and all the territory intervening between it and the Louisiana purchase, were thrown upon our hands all of a sudden, for the purpose of our organizing in them free and independent republican governments, as a basis of future States. It has been an earnest, and, I regret to say, an angry controversy; but the admission of Kansas into the Union yesterday settled at least all that was vital or important in the question, leaving behind nothing but the passions which the contest had engendered. Kansas is in the Union; California and Oregon are in the Union; and now the same contest divides and distracts this Union for freedom and slavery in the Territories of the United States, just as before.

What is the extent of the Territories which remain after the admission of Minnesota, of Oregon, of California, and of Kansas? One million

sixty-three thousand five hundred and seven square miles, an area twenty-four times that of the State of New York, the largest of the old and fully developed States. Twenty-four such States as this of New York are yet to be organized within the remaining Territories of the United States. Now, under what is accepted by the Administration of the Government as a judicial decree, upheld by it, put in practical operation by it, every inch of that territory is slave territory —I speak of that decision not as I accept it, but as it is accepted and enforced by the existing Administration—every foot of it slave territory as much as South Carolina. Over a considerable portion of it a slave code, made by a government created by the Congress of the United States, is enforced; so that, according to the claims of those who insist upon a right in the territory of the United States for slavery, the whole of this one million sixty-three thousand square miles is slave territory. How many slaves are there in it? How many have been brought into it during these twelve years in which it has been not only relinquished to slavery, but in which the court and the Legislature and the Administration have maintained, protected, defended, and guarantied slavery there? Twenty-four African slaves; one slave for every forty-four thousand square miles; one slave for every one of the twenty-four States which, supposing them each to be of the dimensions of New York or Pennsylvania or Indiana, are to cover that portion of the area of our Republic. Sir, I have followed this thing in good faith, with zeal and energy; but I confess that I have no fears of slavery now where, in the peculiar condition of things which has existed, slavery has succeeded in planting only one slave upon every forty-four thousand square miles of territory.

This, then, has ceased to be a practical question. In lieu of it comes up a great and vital and fearful question—the question of Union or of dissolution of the Union; the question of country or of no country; the question of hope, the question of greatness, or the question of sinking forever under the contempt of mankind. Why, then, should I despair that a great people of thirty million will be able to meet this crisis? I have no fear. This is a Confederacy. It is not an imperial Government, nor the government of a single State; it is a Confederacy; and it is, as it ought to be, dependent upon the continued assent of all the members of the Confederacy to its existence, and subject to dissolution by their action; but that assent is to be always taken by virtue of the original assent and held, until, in the form prescribed by the Constitution itself, and in the time and in the manner and with all the conditions which the Constitution prescribes, those who constitute the Union shall declare that it shall be no longer. The thirty days and sixty days and ninety days given us by the disunionists may not be enough for their policy and their purposes. I hope and trust that it may be time enough for the policy and purposes of the lovers of the Union. God grant that it may be so! But if this term shall turn out not to be enough, then I see how and when all these great controversies will be settled, just as our forefathers foresaw when they framed the Constitution. They provided, seventy years ago, that this present controversy, this whole controversy, shall be submitted to the people of the United States in convention, called according to the forms of the Constitution, and acting in the manner prescribed by it. Then, sir, this country will find sudden relief in the prompt and unanimous adoption of the measures necessary for its salvation, and the world will see how well and how wisely a great, enlightened, educated, Christian people, consisting of thirty-four sovereign States, can adjust difficulties which had seemed, even to themselves as well as to mankind, to be insurmountable.

Mr. MASON (after other remarks) said: I can understand, Mr. President, what the Senator means when he recommends to his constituents to speak for the Union; we have had a great deal of that; I can understand what he means when he recommends them to vote for the Union, because he coupled it with a recommendation that they should go into State convention; but I demand to know what he means by their contributing money for the Union.

Mr. SEWARD. I will explain to the honorable Senator, if he wishes. During the present session of Congress, the Government of this Union has seen a sudden depreciation of its credit. From one condition of things which existed a year or two ago, when all the stocks of the Union were at a premium, they have fallen until recently, at one time, the credit of the Union was at a discount of thirty per cent., while the credit of the State of New York, on her six per cent. stock, all the while commands a premium. The commercial community, who to-day petition Congress, have the treasure of the commercial city in their keeping. I have recommended to these gentlemen here, publicly, as I have heretofore recommended to them privately, that they should advance to the Union money on loans and on Treasury notes, as they are now furnishing in that way to the Union the funds with which the President of the United States, the Departments, the Congress, the courts, yourself and myself, the Senator from Virginia, the Army, Navy, and every other branch of the Government, is actually sustained. I have recommended to them, in this crisis, that they sustain the Government of their country with the credit to which it is entitled at their hands.

Mr. MASON. I presumed that that was the use intended to be made of the money which the Senator advised his constituents to contribute to the Union. I did not, in my own mind, do the honorable Senator the injustice to believe that he proposed, with the money which was to be contributed, to subsidize or to debauch the southern States. I had no such view. I took it for granted that the money was to sustain the Army which was to conduct the fight that he recommends to his people.

Mr. SEWARD. Mr. President, the honorable Senator, I am sure, does not mean to do me injustice.

Mr. MASON. Certainly not; and if the honorable Senator wishes to correct me, I yield with great pleasure.

Mr. SEWARD. I contemplated, sir, after the expiration of all the multitudinous trials they are making to save this Union by compromise, a convention of the people of the United States, called in constitutional form; and when that shall have been held, or refused to be held, and found to be impossible to obtain; if then, this Union is to stand or fall by the force of arms, I have advised my people to do, as I shall be ready to do myself, stand in the breach, and stand with it or perish with it. [Applause in the galleries.]

Mr. MASON. Then we have it definite, Mr. President. I want to bring the honorable Senator, the exponent of the new Administration, to the policy which is to be adopted. I understand from him now, that remedies failing through the Constitution by the conventions of the States, his recommendation is battle and bloodshed to preserve the Union; and his recommendation to his people is, that they shall contribute the money which shall march the Army upon the South; for what? To preserve the Union? It is gone; it is broken; there is no Union now in this country. Those States that are out of the Union have broken it as completely as if, instead of six or seven, there were now all the fifteen slave States with them; and if this battle is to be fought, it is to be fought against them upon their own soil, for the purpose of reducing them to colonies and dependencies. It cannot mean anything else. The honorable Senator is too wise and experienced a statesman, the honorable Senator knows too well the construction and theory of this Government, to think for one moment that when you have subjugated the people of the States, you have restored the Union.

Mr. SEWARD. I look, sir, to no such contingency as seceded States and a dissevered Union. I look to no such condition of things. The honorable Senator and I differ in regard to the future. He, with an earnest will and ardent imagination, sees this country hereafter rent and dissevered, and then recombined into separate confederacies. I see no such thing in the future; but I do see, through the return of reason and judgment to the American people, a return of public harmony, and the consolidation of the Union firmer than ever before. The honorable Senator from Virginia can very easily see that we may differ in our anticipations and expectations of the future, because we differ so much in regard to the actual, living present. Here I am, sir, in the Union of the United States, this same blessed, glorious, nobly-inherited, God-given Union, in the Senate Chamber of the United States, pleading for it, maintaining it, and defending it.

The honorable Senator from Virginia says it is gone, there is no Union; and yet he is here on this same floor with me. Where, then, is he? In the Union or out of the Union? He is actually present here; and in spite of himself, I hold him to be still with myself in this glorious old Union. I will not strain the remark, which he means to put forth with candor and frankness. I therefore assume that he infers that because some other Senators were here a short time ago, his associates and mine, and are not here now, but have withdrawn, under circumstances known to the world, and which, for obvious reasons, I refrain from commenting on, therefore their States are gone and the Union is gone with them. Sir, the Senate Chamber is here; the States are here; the Union is here still. Here they will all be; and I expect that, in the exercise of public reason, the free choice of these States, these places will all be filled. If I contemplate in any case that it may be necessary to fight for this Union, it is because treason and sedition may arise, not alone or only in a State of the South, but in States of the North, anywhere and everywhere, be excited and armed, so as to assail the Union; and whenever it shall come to that, whether it is in my own State or in any other State of the Union, then I expect that, whatever can be done having been done—as I have already indicated that all shall be done which reason can do—then I expect that what is right to be done shall be done in the way in which treason in the last resort is necessarily as well as lawfully met.

Mr. MASON. Mr. President, giving the honorable Senator the full advantage of his present commentary upon the speech that preceded it, I yet place before the American people the fact that he proposes but one remedy, either to preserve this Union or to restore it, and that is the *ultima ratio regum*.

Mr. SEWARD. Not to restore—preserve.

Mr. MASON. I will take his own language. Let the facts be what they may, he presents but one remedy—the argument of the tyrant—force, compulsion, power. This is the only resort that the honorable Senator has evinced, either in his speech or in his commentary. He says he is for punishing sedition and treason, whether it is found in the South or in the North. That is the only remedy that he proposes upon the existing facts. He takes no account of there being organized political communities, claiming to be sovereign, claiming to have resumed all sovereign power that they had once delegated to this Confederacy, now out of the Union; actually, completely outside; with not a Federal officer within their limits; with all Federal authority denied, abrogated; with laws punishing as treason at home any obedience to authority abroad; and the honorable Senator still says we know nothing of all that. It is the purpose of the Government, as I understand him, to ignore all that, as though it did not exist; and be it one man or a local combination that are resisting the laws, or be it three, or five, or ten million people, who are resisting the law, still it is treason and sedition, and he knows of no remedy but force!

Sir, I wanted to bring him to that point. I wanted, of all others, that the people of my honored State of Virginia should know it, that the scales should fall from their eyes, if any there are there. I am aware of the miserable, puny, pusillanimous attempt to hoodwink the minds and judgment of that people by crying, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. I point them now to the remedies proposed by the most potent in the councils of the new Government, when it is to come in. I point them to the four great remedies that are to heal these breaches in the Union and preserve it, to use the language of the honorable Senator. Speaking for it will not do; voting will

not do; because those men who are to be parties to the voting are outside of the Union, and will not vote. Money! money! How is money to do it? The honorable Senator has disclosed it. Not by demoralizing and subsidizing by bribery, but using it as the sinews of war. Money is to do it, and is to be contributed by the great commercial city of New York, under the counsels of the honorable Senator who represents them. Money is to be contributed as the sinews of war, because the very next in the four acts of the drama that is to be enacted is battle, battle!

Now, sir, let my people understand this. If there be any among them so puny as to be deluded by the idle efforts to circulate papers among them, stating that "there are propositions for constitutional amendment which will be carried—propositions that will secure your rights in the Union—be patient, like good children, and wait your time"—if there be any among the manhood of the whole South puny enough to be deceived by such contrivances as those, I point them to the words of the honorable Senator, showing that money and war are looked to to reduce them, and these alone.

I know, Mr. President, it is, perhaps, an infirmity of my temperament to appear to exhibit something like angry emotion, when I do not feel it. I have none, sir; none. Men who are upon the eve of measuring swords conduct themselves in a gentle mood to each other, and use no language of menace, or of threat, far less terms of indignity.

Sir, I trust we may avoid the *ultima ratio* of the Senator from New York. If it be in the providence of the speedy future that these slave States are to confederate, and to form an independent Government, with a nationality and a flag, an organization and an army and a navy and credit—if that be reserved in the unspoken speedy future—I trust that the good sense, the humanity, the civilization, the regard for unborn posterity, will lead the people, both North and South, to repudiate the counsels of the honorable Senator from New York. I shall look to their good sense, their humanity, their civilization, to interpose the broad *ægis* of the popular will to avoid the only resort that the honorable Senator looks to—that of force and subjugation.

Sir, I have told gentlemen whom I have met here from other States—honored and honorable men, who have come as volunteers really upon a mission of peace and tranquillity—that it was manifest, in the state of facts now existing, there was great and imminent danger of a collision between the sections, and that all those who desired to preserve the Union, in my judgment, should make it the first and great work to avoid that collision, and to avoid the civil war that must ensue when men's minds really are heated to madness, when passion usurps the throne of reason, and when negotiation and deliberation are ended. Those have been my counsels. What are those of the honorable Senator from New York? Here with hostile fleets and armies arrayed against each other in two of the southern States; here when we are in momentary expectation of hearing of a collision between them, what are the counsels of the honorable Senator from New York? Speak for the Union; vote for the Union; contribute money for the Union; and, last of all, fight for the Union. I repeat it, sir, I trust the good sense, the wisdom, the civilization, the humanity of the age, will rescue this country from the counsels of the honorable Senator from New York.

But, Mr. President, they will have this effect at least: if that potency which is ascribed to the opinions of that honorable Senator, delivered and pronounced in his place here as a Senator, belong to him, it will admonish the people now meeting in their sovereign capacity in convention in all the southern States, to let the delusion pass—the idle delusion that they are to have any security in this Government by amendments to the Constitution. They are not only not proposed, but they are denied and derided. We have now for the first time distinctly shadowed forth that, which I confess, among others, I had seriously apprehended, that the counsels of the leaders would be force, force. We have it now avowed—openly avowed. I trust the scales will fall from their eyes. I trust that in the free States, the non-slaveholding States, there is a body of good men, of wise and enlightened patriotism, freed sufficiently from the shackles of party obligations to see the consequences to which such counsels must lead—a war to restore this Union, or to preserve it, and that they, men of sense in their generation, shall be deluded into a war under the idle pretext that they are only enforcing the laws and punishing treason and sedition. I appeal to the free States, the non-slaveholding States, to repudiate the counsels of the Senator from New York, and disown them. If in the providence of God it is to result that we are to separate into two confederacies, I trust that not the counsels of the honorable Senator from New York, but the counsels of peace will prevail as the only counsels which can avert that greatest of all calamities, a war between brother and brother; a war which could conquer a peace only in oceans of blood and countless millions of treasure. When the peace came, would you find a free people? Would you find a people capable of reconstructing the Government? No. You would find a people subjugated and crouching under the tread of the despot, and you would find the warrior clad in arms with the money contributed under the counsels of the honorable Senator from New York. That would be the result of war, and that is the only result to which such counsels would lead.

Mr. President, I earnestly trust, if, in despite of those counsels and those efforts that are now making, under the mediation of the honored State which I am here to represent to restore harmony and to restore a government, should fail, that there is an enlightened patriotism in this country and in all the States, that will agree to a separation in peace, and repudiate the counsels of the Senator from New York.

Mr. SEWARD. Mr. President, I have been surprised at the delusion which the honorable Senator from Virginia has been able to practice upon himself, so as to make out of a speech, peaceful, fraternal, cordial, such as I have made, a declaration of war. I cannot account for it, how it

is that, while his sense of honor remains clear and bright—as I confess with pleasure it does—he avoids by design personalities which might irritate, yet his judgment is, somehow or other, so under the influence of his passion that he can see nothing but war in a speech which proposes simply this: that since this Union is in danger, every other question should be subordinate to the consideration and the removal of that danger by the pacific, constitutional action of the American people; by speech first, by vote, by consultation, by supplying and maintaining the credit of the Government, and, in the last alternative, after having exhausted all the existing means of settlement, and all others that might be suggested; and, finally, after a constitutional convention of the United States, called in the forms of the Constitution—then, to stand by this good old flag, and, if it is to fall from its eminence, be wrapped in its folds.

Sir, that honorable Senator could have recollected that I came into the committee of thirteen; that I listened to every proposition that was made; that I gave it deliberate—will any one say it was not fraternal?—consideration. Will any one say that I offered no prejudices, no concessions, to propitiate an arrangement? Which one of all the propositions that have been made have I refused to consider? None. When I have voted to substitute a constitutional provision for the settlement of this question, such as that which was offered by the honorable Senator from New Hampshire, [Mr. CLARK,] in preference to the proposition which requires us to take, in an unconstitutional and ineffectual way, the sentiments of the people on the proposition of the honorable Senator from Kentucky, did I do it in a spirit otherwise than that which belongs to a representative of the people who seeks concessions? In regard to this very proceeding of the honorable Senator's State which he so proudly commends, and in terms to which I respond, have I not recommended to my own State, and is it not acting, in sending commissioners to meet the other States in that convention? Does not the honorable Senator know that the State of New York stands ready to hear and consider every plan, whether within the forms of the Constitution or without them, to settle this question peacefully and without resort to the sword, and that I am with the State of New York in that action? It is simply because I have learned from the interest in which—the honorable Senator will excuse me for saying—I understood him to speak, that neither any suggestion that has been made yet and considered, nor any that that convention can make and consider and submit, or any other that has yet been projected, will be satisfactory to that interest of secession or disunion in which interest he speaks. I then have submitted alone that further one: that when all these have failed, then the States of this Union, according to the forms of the Constitution, and in the spirit in which it was made, shall take up this controversy about twenty-four negro slaves scattered over a territory of one million fifty thousand square miles, and say, whether, with the honorable Senator from Virginia, they are willing to sacrifice all this liberty, all this greatness, all this happiness, and all this hope, because they have not intelligence, wisdom, and virtue enough to adjust a controversy so frivolous and contemptible.

Mr. MASON. I will yield the floor in an instant to the Senator from Illinois. I do not know by what authority the Senator from New York says that I speak in a certain interest.

Mr. SEWARD. I certainly should be very sorry if I have said anything unkind or disrespectful to the honorable Senator—[Mr. MASON. "Not at all."]—because the relations between him and myself, especially his bearing on this occasion, forbid me to do so. I understand the honorable Senator to speak in the interest, that is, in behalf of—I will withdraw the word "interest"—but in behalf of, sympathy for, those citizens in several of the States who have availed themselves of the power of the States to pass ordinances of secession, with the intention not again to come into the Union of the United States, if they can prevent it. I beg the honorable Senator's pardon if I have misunderstood him. I hope he will not be excited by that.

Mr. MASON. There is nothing at all to excite in what the honorable Senator meant, or in his language. I only want to know how he ascribed to me the position of speaking in any particular interest. Now, the honorable Senator, as I understand him, means to assume that there are those who desire, as a preferable condition of the country, a separation of these States; but the honorable Senator has no authority on earth to class me among them. I am speaking, sir, in the interests of the State of Virginia, as I understand them as her Senator; and I am speaking upon that class of opinions which I know belong to Virginia, and certainly belong to me, that we will never remain as constituents of this Confederacy unless there are provided, in some mode, guarantees that shall be effectual, beyond doubt, for the preservation of those rights that are necessary to our safety and to our honor.

Why, sir, the honorable Senator knows that the State of Virginia, upon a great and most disturbing cause of difference between the States, has made a distinct proposition, and has said in language, repudiating anything like diplomacy, that it is one which Virginia would accept. That is her language. She has made a distinct proposition upon this question of slavery in the Territories, so that Senators are not uninformed of what one of the States, at least, would be satisfied with in reference to this disputed question of slavery in the Territories.

Mr. DOUGLAS. I was pained this morning when the honorable Senator from New York made a speech, conciliatory and patriotic, showing every desire to have these matters amicably arranged, if possible, that, instead of being met in the spirit in which it was offered, his advance was again repelled, as if there was alarm and fear lest reason, moderation, and justice might return, and the Union men, north and south—the conservative men—might possibly agree upon some basis of settlement. I have not been able to conceal from my eyes that there are gentlemen on this side of the Chamber who do not want any settlement. I saw it the other day when the vote was taken

on substituting the proposition of the Senator from New Hampshire [Mr. CLARK] for that of the Senator from Kentucky. The extremists on the other side received some aid from extreme men on this side by affirmative votes, and still more assistance by men on this side retaining their seats and refusing to vote, thus permitting the proposition of the Senator from New Hampshire to be adopted in consequence of their refusal to vote against it, and instantly sitting down at their tables and writing and sending off telegraphic dispatches that there was no hope, because the Black Republicans had voted down the proposition of the Senator from Kentucky! I have witnessed these things here with pain; but it is no longer worth while to conceal from ourselves the fact that the extremists on this side and on the other side are in concert, from different motives, to defeat a settlement.

Printed at the office of the Congressional Globe.

71.2009.084.09108